

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
NORTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)	
)	
v.)	CRIM. CASE NO. 2:21-cr-188-ECM
)	(WO)
EDWARD ISIAH BRUCE, III)	

ORDER

On March 28, 2022, the Court received a forensic evaluation from Carmen J. Rodriguez, Ph.D., a qualified expert in the field of forensic psychology. (Doc. 48). In the report, Dr. Rodriguez outlined her finding that Defendant Edward Bruce “demonstrated no symptoms of an active mental illness or defect that would interfere with his competency to proceed.” (*Id.* at 9). In the report, Dr. Rodriguez also notes that “the Defendant’s history, current mental state, and collateral information, do not suggest the presence of a mental disease or defect that would impair his ability to understand the nature and quality of the wrongfulness of his actions.” (*Id.* at 9–10).

After being given the opportunity, neither party has presented any information indicating that the Court should not rely on Dr. Rodriguez’s opinion which is unchallenged by the Defendant. For these reasons, and because neither party has requested a competency hearing, the Court finds that a competency hearing is not required for the Court to make a determination as to Defendant Bruce’s competency to stand trial. *See United States v. Johns*, 390 F. App’x 963, 969 (11th Cir. 2010) (“Due process requires that an adequate hearing be held on competency when the evidence raises a bona fide doubt as to defendant’s competency to stand trial”) (quoting *Fallada v. Dugger*, 819 F.2d 1564,

1568 (11th Cir. 1987) (internal citations omitted)); *United States v. Williams*, 262 F. App'x 165, 173 (11th Cir. 2008) (“A district court may rule on [the issue of defendant’s competency] without [the] benefit of a full dress hearing as long as the court has no ‘bona fide doubt’ as to the competence of the defendant.”) (quoting *United States v. Nickels*, 324 F.3d 1250, 1252 (11th Cir. 2003)).

After consideration of all of the evidence, the Court credits the conclusions of Dr. Rodriguez and finds that there is no bona fide doubt that Defendant Edward Bruce is competent to stand trial or otherwise proceed in this case. This matter is presently set for jury selection and trial during the criminal term of court scheduled to begin on August 29, 2022. Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that, for the reasons as stated, the Defendant is competent to stand trial or otherwise proceed in this case.

Done this the 6th day of April, 2022.

/s/Emily C. Marks
EMILY C. MARKS
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE